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REVIEWS AND BOOK NOTICES.

The Origin of Tragedy, with special reference to the Greek Tragedies. By WILLIAM RIDGEWAY, Cambridge University Press, 1910.

Although Mr. Ridgeway's contention as to the Origin of Tragedy has been before the world for years, now in lectures, now in review-articles, the liveliness of its style, its *verve*, its go, does not allow the edge of interest to grow dull at any page in his new volume. It is a book that I have found it hard to lay down for myself, impossible to take up for others except in the character of a summarist. But even the humble part of a summarist, which I am always happy to discharge in the case of a book that interests me, is not to be lightly assumed, inasmuch as at certain points in his demonstration Mr. Ridgeway himself pauses to gather up the results of his survey and thus anticipates the work of the reporter. Such summaries are a godsend to the indolent reviewer, but after all I must go my own way—*ιδίας ὁδοῦς ζητοῦσι φιλόπονοι φύσεις*.

As an anthropologist Mr. Ridgeway starts from the living present and thrusts aside the dead past. The consecrated tradition he knocks into smithereens, or, to be tragically elegant, *λακτίζει εἰς ἀφάνειαν*. The Dorians did not invent tragedy. Aristotle does not say so on his own authority, but gives it merely as an inference that others have drawn from the use of *δρῶν* for *πράττειν*. The dialect of the chorus is no proof. The so-called Doric forms <adduced f. i. by Mr. Rogers, A. J. P. XXV 285 foll.> are old Attic. And as for the dithyrambic origin of tragedy, the dithyramb was not Doric to begin with. The first man to compose a dithyramb, to call it a dithyramb and to teach it to others, was, according to Herodotos, Arion, a native of Methymna of Lesbos, and for that matter this 'ox-driving dithyramb', which Pindar claims for Corinth, was not confined to the story of Dionysos, who, in fact, had nothing to do with the real origin of tragedy, which took its rise from the worship of the dead and the propitiation of the same, a worldwide phenomenon. It was on this cult, the cult of heroes such as Adrastus, that the orgiastic cult of the Thracian interloper was grafted. Dionysos and his ribald crew seem to have been part and parcel of a cult intimately connected with the fertilization of the earth, and the modern carnival of Thrace, as described by Mr. Dawkins, is a survival of the ancient Dionysiac worship, fawnskin, foxskin, and all. Similar rude dramas are still performed in Thessaly and at

Skyros. Thrace, we all remember, was famous for its wine. <Indeed, the very name of Maroneia brings with it a gurgling memory of the delicious lines: ὁδμή δ' ἡδεῖα ἀπὸ κρητῆρος ὁδῶδει | θεοπεσίῃ· τότ' ἂν οὖ τοι ἀποσχέσθαι φίλον ᾔεν.> The Thracians in the army of Xerxes wore head-dresses of foxskins and moccasins of fawnskins and the Bacchantes were Thracian girls. Nor is it strange that this foreign son of Belial should have thrust himself into the place of the local heroes. Similar superimpositions are recorded elsewhere, and we read of Zeus-Amphiaraios, Hermes-Aipyrtos, Artemis-Orthia. The thymele, according to Mr. Ridgeway, was originally a *bema-bomos*, and the stage was not a *trapeza* for holding the offerings, as Mr. Cook thinks, but a kitchen-dresser used as a temporary stage. <If we only knew the first meaning of *σκηνή*! For if *σκηνή* originally meant a 'plank', the fixed combination ἐπὶ *σκηνῆς*, so much discussed by archaeologists, would be readily accounted for and synecdoche would yield the 'shack' meaning of *σκηνή*, which is nearer the mark than 'tent'.>

There were two altars, Mr. Ridgeway goes on to say, in the primitive theatre, survivals of two centres of adoration, the tomb of the hero and the fire-altar of the god; not always, it is true, the Thracian god, but prevalently the Thracian god. That he was a late intruder is shewn by the fact that no Attic month bore his name and that the four festivals that did bear his name fall at seasons when there is no vintage <but plenty of drink>. One of the festivals, the Anthesteria, was a great festival of the dead and probably the oldest of all.

The satyric drama was originally a gross licentious rite, supposed, like those witnessed by Mr. Dawkins in Thrace and by Mr. Wace in Northern Greece, to have a potent effect on the fertility of women, flocks and fields. Such was the cult of Dionysos and the only true Dionysiac element was the satyric drama, which, with its Sileni and its Satyrs, came down into Greece from Thrace along with the worship of Dionysos. This accounts for the clear separation in origin between the satyric drama and Attic Comedy proper. Tragedy and satyric drama, as regular rituals, were acknowledged and supported by the state, but comedy, which grew out of mere buffoonery, had no claim to respect as a religious ceremony, and accordingly the state did not take it up until after tragedy had been developed into a distinct *genre* of literature and until comedy, which had been developed on the lines of tragedy, was also recognized as a legitimate form of the drama. <From all which it is evident that Mr. Ridgeway does not accept the *ἀγών* theory of comedy, according to which comedy arose from the *γεφυρισμός* and belongs to τῷ θεῷ as the satyr-drama does to Dionysos (A. J. P. X 383; XVIII 243).>

In treating of the rise of tragedy Mr. Ridgeway takes up the famous account that Aristotle gives of the development. The assertion that tragedy had arisen out of the grotesqueness of the

satyric drama seems to him inconsistent with Aristotle's own penetrating statement in which the tragedians are represented as the natural successors of the epic poets, Iliad and Odyssey bearing the same relation to tragedy that the Margites does to comedy, which, indeed, is the true explanation.

There were tragedians before Thespis and rude dramatic performances, but the performances which Thespis gave at Athens were of an entirely new character. <μυρίος αἰών, says the famous epigram, πολλὰ προσευρήσει χᾶτερα τὰμὰ δ' ἐμά.> It was this novelty that excited the anger of Solon in the well known anecdote <and one notes the curious perpetuation of the prejudice against dramatic performances in Solon's remote descendant, Plato>. But the offence of Thespis, according to Mr. Ridgeway, did not consist so much in the impersonation of gods and heroes as in the performance for sport or doubtless also for gain, and that not at some hallowed spot but in any profane place. In like manner the mysteries and miracle plays of the Middle Ages, originally held in church in honour of some holy person and for the edification of the faithful, were transformed into a true form of dramatic literature. <The resistance to such secularization has a very modern illustration in the refusal of the performers of the Oberammergau Passion Play to profane it by reproduction in such an unhallowed spot as New York. The theatre of Oberammergau is really only an extension, as it were, of the church, where the performance begins>.

'Tragedy', as Mr. Ridgeway sums it up (p. 70), 'is really a combination of the lyrical outburst of spontaneous grief for the dead and the heroic lay in which the deeds and trials of hero and heroine were recited in narrative form. In the fully developed tragedy the lyrics sung by the chorus represent the immemorial laments for the dead, whilst the messenger's recitals and the dialogue of the dramatis personae correspond to the narrative and speeches of the epos'.

Mr. Ridgeway next proceeds to attack the much discussed name of tragedy. τραγῳδία is a goatsong—<with apologies to Miss Harrison, who derives τραγῳδία from τραγεῖν>, and a goatsong is either a song about a goat or a song sung by a goat, <and in recent American political slang a song sung by a goat would be pathetic enough to satisfy all the conditions of tragedy>. Then there is the τραγικός χορός to be considered, a chorus that celebrates a goat or a chorus composed of goats. The theory that the name arose from the circumstance that a goat was the prize in the early tragic contest does not hold water. The first tragic competition was established by Peisistratos B. C. 535, and the τραγικός χορός at Sikyon was much earlier. Bentley's view that the song of the goats means the song of the satyrs who appeared in caprine form finds no favor with Mr. Ridgeway. In Thracian representations the satyrs have the ears, tails and even the feet of horses. Next after man, says Aristotle, the horse

is the most lustful of all animals. The goat, however, is a good third and in later times the satyrs were undoubtedly represented in caprine form. Still, it seems to Mr. Ridgeway unlikely that both the terms tragedy and satyric drama would have been adopted from the satyrs, especially as the very essence of tragedy was already long in use before the introduction of Dionysos and his satyrs.

Hereupon follows a long discussion of Mr. Farnell's paper on the Megala Dionysia and the origin of Tragedy in which the distinguished author of Greek Cults criticizes the main theory of Mr. Ridgeway. According to Mr. Farnell, the origin of tragedy is to be sought in an ancient European mummary, a winter drama of the season in which the black personage Dionysos Melanagis or Melanthos killed Xanthos the Fair One. But for nature myths, once made fashionable by Max Müller, Mr. Ridgeway has scant respect. 'It is easy', he says, 'to turn any story or name, ancient or modern, into a nature myth', and he refers to Dr. Littledale's classical article in which Max Müller himself was turned into a solar myth. <But these nature myths will not down. The heliacal interpretation of the story of Odysseus, of which I made mock some years ago (A. J. P. XXIX 117), has emerged again in Menrad's new book, *Der Urmythus des Odysseus u. seine dichterische Erneuerung: Des Sonnengottes Erdenfahrt.*>

Be that as it may, our brilliant Irish scholar contends that Dionysos was not a goat god when he entered Greece, but a bull god, that he had no monopoly of goatskins, black or other, that goatskins formed the ordinary dress in primitive times, as indeed the ancient *βαῖτη* is a common article of attire in Greece even to this day, and that the *τραγικὸς χορὸς* mentioned by Herodotos as performed B. C. 600 was named after this dress.

After a recapitulation of the points already made (pp. 92-3), Mr. Ridgeway in his third chapter, by way of reinforcing his theory that Greek tragedy did not arise merely in the cult of a particular deity, but rather from beliefs respecting the dead as widespread as the human race itself, takes us to Hindustan and to the Sanscrit literature of its Aryan conquerors, to the Sacred Plays of Tibet and Mongolia, the Malay Drama, the Drama of the Veddas of Ceylon and the Kirikoraha at Bendiagalge, and then pauses for another survey of the path already trod.

The fourth chapter deals with the survivals of the Primitive Type in Extant Greek Tragedies, and as Greek tragedies have to do with death mainly, Mr. Ridgeway has little difficulty in finding evidence that tragedy arose from the worship of the dead and that the only Dionysiac element in the drama is the satyric play.

But before passing to the important closing chapter on the Expansion of Tragedy, I must say a word about a sad disillusionment of my own, what may be called in the language of the syntactician an *expergeficient* ἄρ' ἦν.

In the Preface to his Choephoroi Mr. Verrall mentions his debt to Professor Ridgeway for the hint out of which has been developed the essay on the scene of the Recognition: 'important', he adds modestly, 'if anything in this volume is such'. (Cf. A. J. P. XIV 398). The hint is the racial peculiarity of the Pelopid hair and foot, a racial peculiarity that effectively disposes of the cheap sneer of Euripides at the work of his great predecessor. It is a hint that Mr. Tucker has also taken in his edition of the play, though, as Mr. Ridgeway complains, without acknowledgment of the source. The explanation, as stated by Mr. Verrall, had a certain fascination for me, having lived all my life in constant presence of an alien race in which hair and foot are marked peculiarities, so that I was prepared to accept enthusiastically Mr. Verrall's statement that Orestes and Electra were octoroons. 'Ebo-shin' and 'gizzard-foot' were familiar words in the mouth of that typical Virginian, Henry A. Wise, who was a close observer of racial peculiarities and taught the youths of my generation to distinguish between the 'mulatto' and the 'molungeon'. To a people jealous of their blood, these things were matters of prime moment. No wonder then, that, carried away by Mr. Verrall, whom I am always happy to follow when I can, the standing phrase ξανθὸς Μενέλαος seemed to be a strong confirmation of the theory, as I have pointed out elsewhere (A. J. P. XXXI 135). Menelaus, unlike Agamemnon, harked back to his white grandam Hippodameia, and passed for a white man; and it was his light complexion that secured for him the hand of Helen, really a goddess of light. But in Mr. Ridgeway's exposition of his own theory Orestes and Electra are of the blonde Achaean race from the North, and thus differ from the dark aboriginal people of Argolis. So it seems that Mr. Verrall has turned the Irish hint round and that I have been guilty of following one of the *idola tribus*. Still, I am happy to think that I need not abandon my theory as to ξανθὸς Μενέλαος, for according to Dr. Brooks, it is much more likely that our μαλθακὸς αἰχμητὴς should have harked back to a white male ancestor than to a white grandam.

In this last chapter, the Expansion of Tragedy, Mr. Ridgeway has some interesting things to say, nothing more interesting than his explanation of what seems to be the strange repugnance of the Danaids to marriage with their cousins, especially strange in view of this form of alliance in the Attic society of the fourth century. The Danaids, however, it seems, represent the earlier period of exogamous marriage, when succession passed through the female line, the *ancien régime* that held its own so long in Egypt <and, according to accounts, has left its traces to this day in Lesbos, the home of Sappho>. It is this same succession that had been the ancient practice at Athens and explains the rebellion of the Danaids against the new order of things, as it yields the main point on which the triumphal acquittal of Orestes

depends. The reconciliation of the old and the new in the person of Hypermnestra is like the reconciliation of the Eumenides. Instead of being conservative, Aischylos, according to Mr. Ridgeway's conception, was in the forefront of his time and this explains the charge of ἀσέβεια. The endogamous theory is far more in accordance with what we know of ancient civilization than the more sentimental view that the Ἰκέτιδες is a plea for love in marriage instead of the legalized rape that marriage is so often even to-day, a crime which Guy de Maupassant depicts with such terrible vividness in 'Une Vie'.

This is an inadequate summary, but I trust not an unsympathetic one. Without sympathy no justice. Some years ago I gave what a French reviewer was pleased to call an ironical account of Terret's *Homère* (A. J. P. XX 87-90), but such has been the progress of unitarianism of recent days that the irony, if irony there be, has lost its edge; and if I do not surrender to Mr. Ridgeway, it is because some of my favorite fancies have been dispelled by a return to the authority of books, and anthropology cannot hope in the long run to oust Aristotle.

BASIL L. GILDERSLEEVE.

ARTURO FARINELLI, *Dante e la Francia dall' età media al secolo di Voltaire*, 2 vols, I, pp. xxvi; 560; II, 381. Ulrico Hoepli, Milano, 1908.

Thirty years ago (1881) Scartazzini in his *Dante in Germania* noted a few scattered allusions to the life and works of Dante in German literature. Several studies have appeared since that time, treating of the influence of the greatest of Italian poets on various European literatures. Of these the most important is Farinelli's *Dante e la Francia*, which has among its many merits that of showing the utter worthlessness on almost every point of Oelsner's work on the same subject, covering the same period, which closes with the end of the eighteenth century. The work of Farinelli, both on account of the rare industry displayed, and the method of treatment, is one of the most remarkable contributions ever made to comparative literature. The contents of the book more than justifies its general title. The author has not only traced the influence of Dante on French writers, but also the Italian poet's indebtedness to the highly developed literatures of Northern and Southern France which were such sources of inspiration and material to nascent Italian literature. In this connection Farinelli has reviewed the evidence for Dante's sojourn at Paris, to show that however old the tradition, and